

THE NEW TARIFF POLICY

PROMINENT VERNON DEMOCRATS STATE THEIR VIEWS OF THE SUBJECT.

Mayor Bassett and Others Think Free Raw Materials are Sure to be Secured.
What Prominent Democratic Representatives at Montpelier Have to say About Revision of the Tariff.

As soon as the election of Cleveland and a democratic congress was assured, the question which naturally suggested itself was—how will the democrats revise the tariff? The Free Press, desiring to give its readers all possible light on the subject, formulated these questions:

1. What do you think a democratic congress will do with the McKinley tariff?

2. In what terms now would you have the tariff revised?

These questions were submitted to leading democrats of Burlington and Montpelier, and to the democratic members of the House, and the replies obtained are appended.

VIEWS OF BURLINGTON DEMOCRATS.

Mayor Bassett said: "I think that one modification of the existing tariff which the democratic party is pretty well agreed in desiring, is in the direction of free raw material. The principle which calls for the free importation of the material of manufacturers cannot by any means be universally agreed, but can very well apply to many articles which may pay a heavy duty."

The party is also, I think, substantially agreed in demanding some reduction of the duties upon the absolute necessities of life. Those products of the McKinley bill which are least likely to be interfered with are those which extend protection to agriculture as under no tariff is the farmer likely to get more than his share of protection. The McKinley bill does in fact secure some benefits to farmers living along or near the Canadian border, and the provisions which accomplish this ought not to be interfered with under existing conditions, and they are not likely to be. The Mine bill will probably furnish the starting point for whatever tariff legislation is attempted, though the experience of the country since that bill was before congress has been such as to suggest some material modifications of its provisions. I am confident that a conservative policy in the revision of the tariff law is the only one which will secure the support of the democratic majority in the next congress and the approval of the president-elect."

Mr. J. H. Holt, president of the Young Men's Democratic club, said: "The democratic party is pledged to a reduction of the tariff; that was the issue on which the election was contested. I think the next Congress will put all raw material on the free list, including wool, which I believe will increase the manufacture of woolen goods in this country, and instead of importing \$250,000,000 of this product and exporting \$100,000,000, we will in a few years manufacture the woolen goods that we consume and export a large amount each year. Putting wool on the free list will operate in the wooden industry just as the putting of hides on the free list did on the leather industry. I think a large portion of the democratic party will be in favor of retaining enough duty to make up the difference of the cost of labor between this country and England, which would not average over 20 per cent. duty. A great many manufacturers, especially in the iron and steel industries, are now receiving from one to three times as much protection as the entire labor cost of producing the articles. Col. Bent, president of the Pennsylvania Steel company, came but very little for any study on steel rates, provided he can get his ore and coal free from duty, and the democrats believe that under a new tariff with all kinds of raw material free, that we could successfully compete in the markets of the world with England, or any foreign country, and still maintain our present wages. I also believe a democratic Congress will repeal the bill allowing federal interference in elections and allow each State to manage its own elections. This has been a source of great irritation without tending to check illegal voting or corruption of the voters. I hope the democrats in Congress will aim to reduce the expenditure of the government, and give the country a wise and conservative administration, maintaining a sound currency and also carrying out the principles of civil service reform."

Mr. N. E. Chamberlin—"I do not think the democratic party will interfere with the tariff at all, except possibly in putting a few articles on the free list. I believe the party will do nothing which will injure a manufacturer in this country."

Alderman W. E. Hall—"The people will demand a change in the tariff. I am of the opinion that the democrats, if they control the next Congress, will give New England manufacturers what they desire, and request and petitioned the 52nd Congress for free raw material. I was a man of manufacturing goods to protect our manufacturers and others. There will probably be a revision of the McKinley bill, and nothing to interfere with the progress of the country."

J. A. Brown—"The democrats in Congress will undoubtedly follow the suggestions made by President Cleveland in his last message. The tariff issue is the one which the victories of 1880 were won, and the people have again approved of his judgment by electing him chief executive of the nation. They will feel duty-bound to give the people the benefit of free raw material, particularly on wool. I do not expect, with a conservative man like Hayes as president, that the fears of foreign peoples of free trade will be realized."

The McKinley bill will be revised, to cause duties reduced and the whole bill adjusted as to do the least possible damage to the manufacturers of the country consistent with a proper reduction of the duties. There is an unjust discrimination in the McKinley bill in favor of the woolen people who consume foreign goods, which will, of course, be corrected. While the expenses of the government require us to tax \$1,000,000 a day, I don't see why we can't furnish adequate protection to all industries, and we will be far removed from free trade. It is time that there are many about free traders in the democratic party, but I have no apprehension that they will mold the legislation. The time has not arrived yet, but I believe it will come when we can safely approach free trade."

OPINIONS OF DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATIVES.

The sudden and somewhat unexpected accession to power of their party renders a large number of the democratic members of the House wholly unprepared to venture an opinion on the tariff question, but a few expressed themselves to the Free Press as follows:

Mr. Henderson of Burlington—"I would

have raw material free that the manufacturers may be protected."

Mr. O'Day of Swanton—"I am in favor of the repeal of the McKinley act that manufactures may be protected by the exemption of raw material."

Mr. French of Pawlet—"I favor some but not all changes."

Mr. Brown of Weybridge—"I favor the duties between on many other articles. Am for free, but not free trade."

Mr. Miller of Newport—"Suppose I should be made free, and then put on the same plan with ours."

Mr. Jenkins of Fair Haven—"I think the democratic Congress will repeat the McKinley act or at least modify some of its many provisions. I cannot imagine in what respect would have the bill revised without an inspection of its contents."

Mr. Cannon of West Rutland—"I cannot say what the democratic Congress will do with the McKinley tariff act, but I believe that they will wipe off from it its bad parts in the direction of free raw material."

Mr. Conard of Montpelier—"I cannot say what the democratic Congress will do with the McKinley tariff act, but I believe that they will wipe off from it its bad parts in the direction of free raw material."

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